THE WRESTLING FLYER NEWSLETTER

MARCH 27, 1993 **ISSUE #25**

INTERVIEW MAX MOON

The following interview with Max Moon-Kato-Paul Diamond (Tom Boric) was conducted by the editor, John Clark, via telephone from his home in Tampa, Florida on March 30. Max Moon is still legally with the WWF until 5/16 but won't be wrestling for them anymore. He is currently working independents and will be going to Japan in July.

Clark: How big of a difference was it for you jumping from the AWA to the WWF, with money, fame, and it being a national promotion?

Moon: It was definitely big with the money, for sure. Because, when the AWA was on its last legs and it was kind of being run like an independent type of deal, they were only running dates from show to show. So, I was barely surviving. Then all of a sudden, I was working full-time. And really, going to the WWF was the first time that I really made any decent money. Before that, I worked Tennessee, Texas, and all these little territories, and that's where I learned how to work. It was quite a big deal. As far as the stardom or anything like that, I never really got any of that just because I was never one of the featured attractions and then I also wrestled under a mask and stuff so I really wasn't recognized. So, I couldn't tell you about that.

Clark: Did you consider it the ultimate big break in your career?

Moon: Oh yeah, because that was always the thing, "Go to New York, go to New York." But, once you get there and you're there for awhile, unless you get a real good break... It looks a whole lot better than it really is.

Clark: Did you have tremendous anticipation going in there?

Moon: Oh, absolutely. But, once I started and saw that I wasn't going to be a Hulk Hogan, or not even close, it was kind of disappointing because I've been an athlete all my life. I played professional soccer before I went into wrestling. To compete is in my blood, and for me to work hard and work my ass off and do the best that I could do, that was never good enough to advance me there. It's a weird sport. In any sport, you train harder and you get better, you become first-string or you get more money or whatever. And in this, it doesn't matter what you do. Maybe Japan, they appreciate the talent. But, not the WWF.

Clark: What other types of sports did you play and what's your background as far as what you did before you got into wrestling?

Moon: I played any and all sports. I'm a sports fanatic. I grew up in Canada so I played hockey. I played basketball in high school. Soccer was really my life. I was born overseas, in Coatia, where the war is now and it used to be a part of Yugoslavia. My father played soccer over there and I kind of followed in his foot steps, and that's all I ever wanted to, was play professional soccer. Which I did, in 1980 I was the sixth pick overall in the first round of the North American Soccer League draft. I was drafted by the Calgary Boomers and I played there a year and then I played three years in Tampa. And then the whole league folded. At that point, I didn't feel like going to get a regular job yet. Just being a good athlete and watching wrestling I thought I could do fairly well at it. I started working out at the Gold's Gym in Tampa and I met the Malenkos, I became friends with Boris Malenko's son Joe. He told me his dad was training guys at the time, and I trained.

Clark: When you went to Titan, compared to when you were wrestling in the AWA, regarding the public, was there an increase in the amount of recognition that you received?

Moon: No, not that much. Just because first of all, I went in there as Paul Diamond and I was just the first or second match. So, you're not given much TV time. Obviously, there were some fans who knew me from the AWA, but there wasn't that much. And then after that, the other ones were under a mask, so there was none really.

Clark: How did you feel about that? Were you kind of looking forward going in there to getting more recognition?

Moon: No, not really. Hey, if it became great, I'd sign autographs or whatever, that's fine. But, I just wanted to do the best that I could and be the best that I could be in the ring and be respected by the peers, by the other wrestlers, as far as my ability. Because, fans have different opinions, but unless you step in the ring... To be respected by the peers or the people that know how the business is, is what is most important, I feel. I think I pretty much accomplished that. But, that gets you more frustrated because all the guys say, "Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, you're good," this and that, but yet the promoters aren't giving you a push and you're not getting anywhere. That's frustrating more than anything.

Clark: When you look back on working for both organizations, were you happier as a person working for either AWA or WWF, or wasn't there much of a difference?

Moon: I wasn't unhappy working for the WWF, I just at times got frustrated because I thought that I could contribute more to the company and I was never really given a chance. So, I'd go through periods where I'd try and talk to them and come up with ideas and think about new stuff. It wasn't going anywhere. Finally, I think they realized a little bit what I could do, but the only thing that did was keep me employed. That's it. By being better and working harder it didn't put me up the ladder. When you look at what's going on in the business. I don't knock anybody, but the fans can see what's pretty much going on. We entertain the people, but they appreciate good performers as opposed to not good performers and they can tell the difference.

Clark: Since you're a smaller sized wrestler, you might say, did you think that you had to be bigger to go to the WWF?

Moon: Yeah, you know, that was always the thing, "Oh, they don't take you unless you're 250 lbs." Yeah, I kind of thought to be successful I'd have to be involved in a tag. And I didn't disillusion myself and think at 225 lbs., 230 lbs., I was going to be Hulk Hogan. That wasn't it. I think the way the Max Moon thing started out, and if we had gone with it, I would have been very pleased with that. I think I just wanted to be kind of in the middle of the card and be kind of like a special attraction for the kids, especially the way that character was for the kids, I think if they would have done anything at all with it, the kids would have looked at like a superhero type of thing. But it never got off the ground.

Clark: Would say that the attitude about having to be bigger to make it in the WWF or a big organization like that is a bad mentality to have?

Moon: Yeah, I think so. You know, I just don't understand. You look at their talent right now and they've got so many huge guys and I think the people just get sick of seeing two big guys just... not doing anything. There's some guys there that are good athletes but are limited by their gimmicks. And then there's other guys that are just huge, and that's all. Once you see a big guy, maybe you'll go out the first time because he's so huge and so muscular, but then if he can't wrestle, why would you go back to see him again? I think with some of the small guys, if they can train the people, they can keep coming back and giving them different stuff. With some of these big guys, it's always the same stuff.

Clark: Do you think one of the main reasons why there's been a steroid problem in wrestling is because of that mentality about being bigger?

Moon: Yeah. The Legion of Doom/Road Warriors, I love the guys to death and they're great, and this obviously wasn't their fault. They just basically came into wrestling and they got a big push. They got a hell of a fan following and all of a sudden, everybody that saw wrestling thought, "Wow, I've just got to be huge, and the wrestling part will take care of itself, just as long as I'm big." So, I think that's where it started. But I think we should just look at where it's gotten us now. It was great to see huge bodies for awhile, but now we're back to square one, let's see some wrestling again.

Clark: Did you ever use steroids to get bigger because of that mentality of you have to be big to make it?

Moon: Yeah, I'm not going to say that I haven't, because I have. I would probably say most of the guys have at one time or another. It was for that, but also for the type of schedule we have, being on the road 22-25 days a month, flying everyday. Also, to maintain looking halfway decent. I didn't have to, obviously it was a choice. But certainly, it made it easier on you and your joints and it made it easier to keep your weight up and look halfway presentable on television, which I think is important.

Clark: Were you using steroids at all in the AWA?

Moon: No, no.

Clark: Was it just in Titan that you used them?

Moon: Yeah. And right before, too, just because you want to go in there and you want to impress with the way you look.

Clark: Do you look back on it, would you consider it a mistake that you used them or are you happy about that decision?

Moon: No, I mean, I wasn't a heavy user or anything. It was just a temporary thing and I haven't messed with them for almost a couple years now and I don't expect that I ever will again. I stopped doing them because the testing came in and I also realized that the body just wasn't meant to be on that stuff for a long, long time. And what was going to change, you just have to either keep going the way the schedule was or stop at some point. It was like, coming in there and looking good was fine, but then you just have to keep going with it where it would have stopped.

Clark: Is there any truth to the statement that going to the WWF, the biggest wrestling company in the United States, can change a person's personality and the way they treat others?

Moon: I suppose, but there are very few. That's just the personality of each individual. I think some of the guys, no matter what they do- if they're complimented or they're doing well- they're going to get a big head, I'm sure that's happened, but not very often. I can perhaps think of only a couple occasions like that.

Clark: Did going to the WWF help boost your confidence?

Moon: Yeah, I was pleased because a lot of guys to get in there, they have friends or somebody to help get them a job there. And I didn't have anybody in there. They called me to inquire what I was doing at that time. So, I didn't call them. That made me happy, that they realized that I had some talent. But on the same token, when I got there, I wasn't in the position I wanted to be in. And I couldn't understand why.

Clark: How hard has it been for you in this business to find honest, true, real friends who wouldn't go stab you in the back to further their own success?

Moon: (laughs) Very hard. It's unfortunate. That's the negative side to the business. I've been in this business for eight years and I can count on one hand the number of friends I have. And you learn. You think they are, but in the end, you find it's almost non-existent. It's too bad.

Clark: Did you find that when you got to the WWF that there were a lot more of the jealousy problems or the stabbing in the back problems going on up there than in the AWA?

Moon: Like I said, I wasn't up very high, so who was going to stab me in the back to get the opening matches! But yeah, I kind of saw what was going on.

Clark: What do you think has been the secret to your success being able to stay with WWF for about three and a half years or so?

Moon: Just working my ass off, not complaining, being on time, and doing what they ask. I thought that was the key to longevity there, and obviously it is to some extent. But, I also thought that would be the key to get better position, which obviously it wasn't. Some guys bitch and complain and get things. Whereas, if I were to bitch and complain, "We don't need this headache, we'll get rid of you," which they did.

Clark: Do you think it was very tough for you working in the WWF as Paul Diamond when there really wasn't much of a personality presented or much of a character presented for you?

Moon: Yeah, yeah, it was a little frustrating, when you end up getting beat on TV. From other than the first place that I worked, everywhere else I kind of had a half-decent spot. It was not easy. I guess I just kind of realized that it was a job and money was money. But like I said before, just being a competitive person and being an athlete, it was not easy to accept that.

Clark: I've noticed that you haven't done many TV interviews, does that in any way relate to who you are as a human being? Is there any awkwardness about doing the interviews?

Moon: How should I say it? In a regular life, I am a shy person. But once I am the character that I am supposed to be, then there's no problem. It's a whole different ball game. It always intriqued me, too, because I know how shy I am as a person and then to go out there in front of people and absolutely have no inhibitions at all.

Clark: Was it easier for you to do it under the mask?

Moon: No, that part of it didn't matter at all. It was the fact of getting out there and being Paul Diamond. Doing the thing under a mask, it was the same way but in a different way.

Clark: What would you say was your favorite role that you did in the WWF, either Paul Diamond, Kato, or Max Moon?

Moon: Well, I thought Max Moon was going to be it, and it was. But, I enjoy working no matter what it is. My least favorite was being Paul Diamond just because of the position I was in. I just enjoy working, so whatever it is, I try and do the best I can. Being a heel or a bad guy or whatever you want to call it, I enjoy that more than anything. But, the Max Moon thing, I realized that I could be something really good for the kids and for myself. I enjoy that. I will probably have to change the name or change the costume a little bit, but I'd still like to take that basic idea somewhere because I do believe in it. I mean, there's not a character out there right now in wrestling that the kids can really identify with like that. I believe in it and I'd like to make a go of it.

Clark: Did you ever come up with any of the characters you wrestled as or give them ideas for them?

Moon: No. And that's another thing, there was never a character planned for me. It was just like, "Oh, this guy left, we'll stick you in there." I was kind of like the utility man, basically. With the Orient Express, Sato left, so I was there for them. Same with Max Moon, they thought Konnan was going to do it but things didn't work out.

Clark: Did you feel that you were appreciated for being there when they needed you?

Moon: Yeah, I think so. Being appreciated and getting pats on the back is fine, but show me my paycheck or let me advance and let me try and contribute more to what I think I can do. There was no problem with that, I got plenty of compliments, but that doesn't pay your bills.

Clark: Do you think that the character Kato was at all a bad stereotypical presentation of what exactly a Japanese wrestler is? And do you think that it was disrespectful at all to the Japanese who take wrestling extremely seriously over there?

Moon: Well... maybe to a certain little extent. But, I don't really think so. I think he had the wrestling ability and stuff and I wasn't poking fun at them as Kato. So no, I don't think so.

Clark: Do you think Vince is or was trying to go back to focusing on the basics of wrestling and lessoning the gimmicks and stuff?

Moon: No, not really. What I don't understand is, he said we're going back to wrestling and then he came out with a clown. I just don't see how that's going back to wrestling. He didn't exactly talk to us about it but it came through the agents. I was happy to hear that, though. I thought, "Wow, here's a chance, here's an opportunity for some of us guys who can do something." And then Shawn Michaels started doing well and Bret Hart did, too, so I thought, "Wow, there might be a chance." But, there's guys that have great ability, like Undertaker, there's a big guy who can do anything and all, but just because of the character, he can't do it. That's what I don't understand, if you want to go back to wrestling. I think they've just carried their characters way, way out of line, like the voodoo thing. It's kind of way, way out there. I think with all this glitz and the characters and stuff, we've driven off the hardcore wrestling fans and now we've picked up the white collar people, but they bring their kids just because it's just like movies and show business, and they really don't understand wrestling.

Clark: At the point before you started as Max Moon, if they had asked you to do some type of silly gimmick like a Ninja Turtles routine or something outlandish like that, would you have done it?

Moon: Yeah, that was my thing, just do whatever they asked. I wanted to keep a job. I was in no position to start demanding or say, "Hey, this is stupid." I mean, if you want a job and you want to make money, you have to do what's asked of you.

Clark: Would you have any trouble dealing with yourself as far as respecting yourself in regards to what you were doing?

Moon: If it was something really, really goofy, I might say yes at first but then somewhere down the line, I might not be able to deal with it. I can't really say because I've experienced it. But yeah, I know me, I don't think I could keep going with something really silly.

Clark: Being around all those gimmicks and stuff, was it hard for you or is it hard for you at all to still care and respect your profession, pro wrestling, or to feel proud that you are a professional wrestler?

Moon: No, not always. If people didn't know I was, I didn't make it a point to go ahead and tell them whatever I did. Also because, how do you answer to an intelligent human being when they ask you about something like the voodoo thing and some of the goofy stuff with the clown wrestling? I mean, you can't insult the people and bullshit them. And they'll ask, so what do you tell them? That's the reason why if they didn't know, I wouldn't go into what I did.

Clark: Do you think that there could have been a big merchandising future for Max Moon with the WWF?

Moon: Yeah, yeah. I don't know if there were any plans yet about it, that never really got that far. I imagined when it was first developed, I thought for sure that that would have been part of it. Since it's for the kids, I just don't see why they wouldn't. I was very excited about it. I thought this was something that might bring in some good money as far as the marketing part was concerned.

Clark: It seemed as though the Max Moon thing was getting over good and things were really looking up for you, and then all of a sudden, some problems develpoped in late December. What happened?

Moon: I mean, you've heard the rumors (about him having a conflict with another wrestler in the WWF over a personal and private matter that is of an extremely delicate nature in each person's private life). I believe that's why I was let go, because of those rumors which weren't true. They handled it in a different way because they knew if they did it that way that legally they couldn't let me go for that reason. But, I'm sure about the reason they let me go. They didn't say anything. They sent me my release in the mail.

Clark: Was that a slap in your face, do you feel?

Moon: Are you kidding, a kick in the ass is more like it! Yeah. After working there for three years, there was a lot of ups and downs and I made decent money and I worked hard. But, it wasn't just me, one thing I noticed- and I just don't understand why- what's so hard about being a businessman and say, "Hey, this happened, and I don't have anything for you right now. Thank you very much for your three years. And we'll see you." I mean, that's human. I thought that's just the way to do things. I'm never interested in that part of our life. I don't know how it is in different businesses, if it works the same way. I've always been in sports and been an athlete and stuff. I played soccer, and if they let you go, they let you know. I assume it's like that in football and other sports as well. But here, nobody would talk to you, but just send you a note. It's a different way of doing things, I guess.

Clark: Did these rumors going around hurt you?

Moon: Yeah, I suppose. I mean, when all that came out I went home and had my arthroscopic knee surgery. When you're not there, you can't defend yourself. By the time I got back about a month, no matter what I said or did, it didn't matter. Once it came out, that was it, I couldn't anything to erase it. So yeah, it hurt me.

Clark: What kind of communication did you have with Vince about this matter during that time?

Moon: Right around Christmas, some of the guys called me, as well as you, and told me that I was let go. At that point, I didn't even know. I tried to call and I didn't get anybody until after New Year's. And they denied that I was being let go and that I was going to still stay booked. And then the dates I was supposed to go back, the television tapings, there was no word from them yet. I got a hold of somebody again and they said that they were just letting my knee heal. However, I had a match for Royal Rumble that got cancelled. And then I went up to the Raw taping and I was told there by Vince himself that he was going to keep me and this and that and that everything was going to be fine. He said he would let me know if anything was going wrong or if there was any problems. So after that talk, I really felt good. I thought hopefully things would get back to normal. And then after that, I went on the road for about five days, a five day tour, and things had just obviously changed. I had been winning all my matches prior to that and all of a sudden I was wrestling Skinner- and he's a heck of a guy and I respect him- but when we wrestled before, I always won, and now all of a sudden, I was losing. I thought, "Well, maybe he still going to punish for whatever." I was just trying to get through it. And than at Royal Rumble, they gave out schedules or booking sheets and I never got one. I was trying to figure out what happened, what was going on. And they were adding me to a bunch of shows and that we were going to go over my bookings the following day. And then Marty Jannetty was let go so they sent me to fill in for him over in Europe. They said, "Here's your contract for going to Europe." So I thought, "Well great, I'll just get my other bookings when I come back." I returned from Europe, a Thursday night, and the following Monday was a television taping again. And I had no plane tickets, no schedules, nothing. So that Friday, I tried calling him three times and nobody got back to me. The secretary didn't say anything. And Tuesday, I got my mail.

Clark: Were you hurt at all about how Vince had told you he was going to keep you on and everything, and did you think he was honest?

Moon: He said that he was being honest with me when he said that. I wouldn't have minded it so much, even if he said that he was going to keep me on, if he had called me after I got back from Europe and say, "Hey, we're just having problems, we tried, but we can't. I'm going to send you a release." That's all he would have had to say. I told him that day when we talked at Raw, I said, "If you want to let me go, there's no problem, just please let me know." So, that's the only thing that I'm kind of hurt by. If you don't expect anything from anybody, it can't hurt you, so I guess that's the way to look at things.

Clark: What did your release say about the legal rights to Max Moon?

Moon: It just said that the rights to the Max Moon thing, the name and all that, would remain with the WWF. It said my contract expires as of May 16 and, "Good luck."

Clark: Did it upset you that he was looking for another wrestler to do the Max Moon thing during that time when he didn't really tell you too much about what your future looked like?

Moon: I knew about it because I talked to the person at the end. It upset me because I had asked him about that and he had denied it at that time when the guy, Ted Petty (Cheetah Kid), got a tryout. I found out about it and then I asked about it and they denied it. I just saw him at an independent show and I talked to him about it. But like I said, what are you going to do, that's their way of doing business. And my new motto is, "If you don't expect anything from anybody, they can't hurt you," that's the way I'm going to go on from now on.

Clark: What effect has this had on your life?

Moon: Well, I kind of hit a low point there in Europe. But, I rebounded and I've got the Japan tour, I've got some independents, I've got a bunch of time to train for the Japan thing and I'm going to be in the best shape that I've ever been in. I feel I can work well with the likes of Liger and guys like that. From what I've heard, they need someone like that and I am going to try and be the best that I can be. It's nice to be home for a little bit. For the last three years, I haven't hardly spent any time at home. As long as I get enough independent work to get through until July and then that's when I go to Japan. I'm kind of putting all my eggs into that basket right there, to try and do something with Japan.

Clark: What are you going to do with Max Moon after May 16?

Moon: What I'm trying to do is, find a way, maybe through magazines and stuff, to change the name and so I don't have any problems with it.

Clark: Do you own the costume and how was it first using it?

Moon: Yeah, I paid $1,000 for the costume. So if he doesn't want me to use it, he can buy it back from me. Maybe the first couple times it was tough to wrestle in it, but it's comfortable, it's just spandex. They first called it the Comet Kid the first week and then at the next TV they came up with the name Max Moon. Somebody mentioned to me that they had to change the name because the Comet Kid was a comic book or something and that it was trademarked.

Clark: Do you think all those rumors going around is an example of how this business and the wrestlers can sometimes be very cruel?

Moon: Yeah, absolutely. There's so many things that pop up that are not true. When I first started in the business, the guy who trained me, Boris Malenko, said, "Believe nothing you hear and only half of what you see." That's the best way to describe it. You get bad breaks in life and then you've just got to keep on plugging along, and that's what I'm doing. It was a bad break, but a lot of other people have had worse breaks. I'm still healthy and I still have my life and my wife and my family. Now that I'm not working for the WWF and I home sometimes, maybe I can have some kids. It's nice to be home. It's a little bit of a pain that you've got to stay on the phone and be calling people to get work, so that's a little drawback. But other than that, working basically weekends, Friday and Saturday night, and making almost the same money that I made with WWF working the whole week, is not too bad.

Clark: Do you think that there are going to be some major changes in wrestling in the near future, maybe see territories come back stronger?

Moon: I think in a few years you might see that picking up again. There's a lot of things going on with the WWF legally and stuff like that, so that might contribute somewhat. Also, there just not being as successful as they were in the mid eighties when no matter where they went, no matter who they put on the card, it sold out. Now I think the territory where they're successful is shrinking. If they leave some of these places alone for awhile, territories will start up again.

Clark: What else might you be thinking of doing outside of wrestling?

Moon: I'll be 32 years old this year and I'm happy in Tampa. There is life after wrestling, believe it or not. If things don't pan out, I'm not really worried, I'll just go back to school or something. Way back when I went to college I took some computer courses and before I started for the WWF I went back to school and took a computer course and it got half-way done. In fact, I just checked one out last week, an eighteen month course in computer programming, because I know the longer you wait, unless you're making big, big money where you're secured and you quit at forty years old or something cause you have a bunch of money saved or something, so far that's not the way it's gone for me so I have to prepare for future times- a regular life! But this Japan trip is a big thing, and I'm just going to see how things go.

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

Hulk Hogan, along with Jimmy Hart, was in England last weekend to promote his new movie Mr. Nanny that will be opening over there next week and also to do some promotions for Wrestlemania, which will air over there without charge to its viewers. On 3/27 in London, Hogan made appearances on two major television shows; a morning kids show called Going Live and an adult show called Saturday Night Zoo. On Going Live, a younger child asked Hogan about how God thinks about all the wrestlers hating each other and hurting each other. Hogan responded by saying that wrestling wasn't what it seemed and that it's all acting and entertainment. Hogan also physically joked around with the host, bodyslamming, suplexing, and pulling down his pants. One of the last times he did that, he was sued by comedian Richard Beltzer after he claimed that he suffered injuries after Hogan applied a wrestling hold on him. On one of the shows, Hogan also told the audience about his strong objection to drugs. He openly talked about the death of his brother Alan Bollea, who died in 1986 from a drug overdose. Hogan said that because his brother was poor, that he would always give him money for food. Hogan explained that on the day his brother died, he had given him $150 to buy food, but that it was instead used to buy drugs, which resulted in his death. Hogan's movie will be released here in the U.S. this summer and he will begin fliming a pilot called Thunder in Paradise in Tampa after Wrestlemania. He will also appear at many house shows in late May with Beefcake.

Jim Ross, who as of 4/1 hasn't received his official written release from WCW, had Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels and Bobby Heenan on his 3/28 radio show on WSB in Atlanta and announced that he is now an announcer for the WWF. McMahon raved to the listeners that Ross' entrance into the WWF was a monumental affair and that it was a tremendous acquisition by the WWF. McMahon stated, "WCW's loss is unquestionably the World Wrestling Federation's gain." That would mark one of the first times McMahon has publicly acknowledged the existence of WCW or even that another wrestling organization in the U.S. exists. Ross will be at Wrestlemania and WSB will be airing a couple of the matches live on next's week radio show.

After the Wrestlemania show on 4/4, there will be some talent let go and there will also be some new talent coming in. Barry Darsow, who has been with the company since 1987 when he started as Smash of Demolition and then more recently wrestled as Repo Man, will be gone and he looks to take time off to get in better shape. While for the most part being a loan from the USWA, Koko B. Ware is also gone. Virgil, who started with the WWF in 1986 as the bodyguard for Ted DiBiase will be let go after the April European tour. The Big Bossman, who has been with Titan since 1988, will most likely be joining All Japan Pro Wrestling using his old gimmick, Big Bubba Rogers. It is expected that Typhoon will either be history or will take some time off. Randy Savage will stay with the company but will no longer wrestle, he will be doing charity and publicity work. Earlier this month, tryouts were given to Night Stalker (Bryan Clark), Mr. Curtis Hughes, Killer Karl Wallace, and Norman (Mike Shaw). At this point, the only one that will be coming in Bryan Clark, with a different gimmick. At the

TV tapings on 4/5 and 4/6 in Arizona after Mania, The Lightning Kid (Sean Waltman) will receive a tryout. There is word that they would like him to do the Boxing Turtles gimmick. The Powers Twins out of New York were also being looked at as possible candidates for the Boxing Turtles gimmick. Ron & Don Harris, who joined WCW on 3/8 as The Bruise Brothers and are already gone from there, will be joining the WWF as well. The Long Riders who last wrestled in Florida will also be in. And of course, Luna Vachon is due in after Wrestlemania.

The WWF presented its first installment of their new Hall of Fame concept by inducting Andre the Giant into it by way of a tribute video that aired on the 3/22 Monday Night Raw. WCW is going to introduce their Hall of Fame in conjunction with their Slamboree PPV on 5/23. *Pro Wrestling Illustated's* Senior Editor Bill Apter will be handling the research and will be in charge of contacting and dealing with the individuals that will be inducted into the WWF's Hall of Fame.

Luna Vachon will be joining the WWF after Wrestlemania and is set to manage Shawn Michaels. She has shaved her head and now has a mohawk type haircut with strands of hair loosely hanging from her head as well. She is expected to feud with Sensational Sherri upon her arrival with some mixed tag matches also involved in their program.

The midget wrestlers, who haven't actively been a part of WWF cards since 1987, apparently will be given more focus in the upcoming months. On the WWF's recent March to Wrestlemania USA special, Tiger Jackson & The Bushwhackers beat Little Louie & The Beverly Brothers. Jackson and Louie are booked to work with each other full-time during the summer months. The WWF is also contacting some midget wrestlers who currently work in Mexico.

For the April Europe tour, Brutus Beefcake was pulled and Bob Backlund will take his place against Shawn Michaels. Owen Hart, because of his injury, will replaced by Virgil against Terry Taylor... In a titel for title match on the USWA card in Louisville, KY on 3/30, USWA Champion Jerry Lawler beat IC Champion Shawn Michaels by DQ. Also, Big Bossman & Jeff Jarrett beat The Harlem Knights.

WWF at the Arco Arena in Sacramento, CA on 3/26: Skinner beat Koko B. Ware. Tito Santana beat The Tonga Kid. Typhoon beat Repo Man. Nasty Boys wrestled Headshrinkers to a double-DQ. Crush beat Papa Shango. Bret Hart & Mr. Perfect beat Lex Luger & Razor Ramon.

WWF at the Civic Arena in Pittsburgh, PA on 3/26 with about 8,800: Brooklyn Brawler beat Jim Powers. Tatanka came down to the ring for his match with Doink, who blindsided him, rammed him into the metal steps, and hit him with three chair shots. The agents came down and took Tatanka back to the dressing room saying he might be able to wrestle later. Bam Bam Bigelow beat Kamala, as Kimchee interfered in the match, which caused Kamala to get counted out while chasing Kimchee back to the dressing room area. Bob Backlund beat Damian Demento. Undertaker beat Yokozuna by DQ in 3:45 when he was hit in the head with Yokozuna's salt bucket. Tatanka beat Doink by DQ when Doink squirted him in the face, and there was a great brawl after the match. Virgil beat Reno Riggins. Steiners beat Beverlys when Scott pinned Blake with the frankensteiner. -By John Lanigan

WWF at the Spectrum in Philadelphia, PA on 3/27 with about 9,000 ($138,000): Brawler beat Powers. Bigelow beat Kamala via countout. Backlund beat Demento. Undertaker beat Yokozuna by DQ. Tatanka beat Doink by DQ. Virgil beat Riggins. Steiners beat Beverlys when Scott pinned Blake with the frankensteiner. -By Paul Perkins

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

Johnny B. Badd's contract expired on 3/31 and WCW offered him guaranteed money, a slighter higher amount than what he was making before. Before his contract had expired, Badd gave WCW a verbal agreement (which holds the same weight as a written agreement, ask Kim Basinger) that he was going to stay with them. The WWF made a major play for him, but because of Badd's verbal agreement with WCW it would be a legal mess that none of them want to go through if Badd were to go to the WWF. Currently, they're working out contract details and both sides expect Badd to stay with the company.

Tully Blanchard, who retired from wrestling several years ago to enter the ministry, is negotiating with WCW to return to the ring and once again be a member of the legendary Four Horseman. He was in Atlanta on 4/1 and has already agreed to appear at the 5/23 Slamboree. Several of his peers believe that he will be back in the ring very soon.

A very interesting, strange and peculiar angle developed at the TV tapings in Monroe, LA on 3/29. During the Arn Anderson vs Erik Watts match, Bobby Eaton came out to the ring and caused Anderson to get DQed and Anderson & Eaton were arguing after the match. Later, Anderson was wrestling Shanghai Pierce when Tex Slashinger & Eaton came out and all three began beating up on Anderson. Then, Watts ran in with a chair and hit Slashinger, Pierce and Eaton with it, knocking them out of the ring. After this incident, Anderson stated that he now respects Watts as a wrestler and that Watts isn't such a bad kid. Then, a match was taped that saw Anderson & Watts beat Eaton & Slashinger. This series of angles will be airing on WCW Main Event in the coming weeks and Watts & Anderson will be teaming up for awhile. In Smoky Mountain Wrestling, Anderson and Eaton had already been feuding before this even took place.

Chris Benoit missed his dates over the 3/27 weekend and also was not at the TV tapings on 3/29 and 3/30, but will be returning and will work for WCW during April and about half of May before he goes back to Japan on 5/24 to participate in a junior heavyweight tournament that will last about three weeks. Benoit last wrestled for WCW on the 2/21 Superbrawl against Too Cold Scorpio. He was then on tours in Japan and Australia before returning to his home near Calgary about 3/24. Bad communication between him and the offices is the reason why he missed his WCW dates last week.

Cactus Jack will appear on Howard Stern's radio show on 4/12 to hype WCW's return to New York on 4/15 at the Paramount... WCW will once again hold an overseas tour in October, with some dates in Germany this time... Philadelphia promoter Stephen Truitt was fired because he didn't make WCW aware that he was going to be on ECW's TV (Stevie Wonderful) as a commentator... Sid Vicious' lawyers were supposed to meet with Ole Anderson on 4/1 to work out the details of the contract... Ole Anderson took a day off on 4/2 to go to Chattanooga, TN to see his son Brian Rogowski compete in a major amateur wrestling tournament. Brian is training for WCW at Jody Hamilton's wrestling school in Atlanta... The Bad Boys (from Florida) managed by Blackjack Mulligan should be entering WCW soon as Mulligan has been talking to Ole Anderson frequently about them running a Florida "C" league, a group of developmental towns... The last drug test that WCW did was in November, but there are plans of implementing a program soon.. It appears as though Junkyard Dog and Dick Slater will be returning to WCW shortly... Bobby Eaton returns full-time to WCW in less than two weeks.

WCW at the Omni in Atlanta, GA on 3/28 with about 2,800: Erik Watts beat Tex Slashinger. Too Cold Scorpio beat Buddly Lee Parker. Max Payne beat Johnny Gunn. Ron Simmons (with the injured Dustin Rhodes in his corner, who was originally scheduled to face Simmons) beat Shanghai Pierce. Barry Windham & Paul Orndorff beat Barbarian & Cactus Jack when Windham pinned Barbarian. Big Van Vader beat Sting by DQ (Harley Race was held above the ring in a cage) when the ref saw Sting hitting Vader with a strap that Vader had originally used on Sting. After the match, Austin & Pillman ran in and beat up Sting until Steamboat & Douglas made the save. That brawl started the final match, Steve Austin & Brian Pillman wrestled Shane Douglas & Rick Steamboat to an excellent 45:00 time limit draw. -By Steve Prazak

WCW at the Scope in Norfolk, VA on 4/1: Too Cold Scorpio beat Doug Gibson. Max Payne beat Johnny Gunn. Van Hammer beat Vinnie Vegas. Cactus Jack & Barbarian beat Wrecking Crew. Paul Orndorff beat Tom Zenk. Big Van Vader beat Sting by DQ. Brian Pillman & Steve Austin beat Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas. -By Jeremy Soria

THE INDEPENDENT SCENE

UWS in Bayonne, NJ on 3/19 with about 1,150: Cousin Luke beat Kodiak Bear. Demolition Blast beat Abdul Singh. Jose Luis Rivera beat Larry Z. Larry Winters beat Evan Storm. Jimmy Snuka beat Tommy Cairo. Jake Roberts beat Demolition Ax (Bill Eadie) by DQ when Blast ran in... UWS at the Holy Family Church in Brooklyn, NY on 3/20 with about 1,000: S.D. Jones beat Kodiak Bear. Cousin Luke beat Abdul Singh. Demolition Ax & Blast beat Mr X & Larry Winters. Jose Luis Rivera beat Larry Brisco. American Ninja drew with Chris Michaels. TV Champion Jimmy Snuka beat Jake Roberts... Headlining an indie show on 3/19 in Pleasantville, NJ drawing 400 was The Pitbulls beating The Samoans (Afa & Lloyd- The Samoan Warrior)... Dino Sanna's WWWA in Harleysville, PA on 3/20 had their new champion Nailz beat Max Moon (Paul Diamond), Jack Hammer won a battle royal and also beat IC Champion Tony Atlas by DQ, Johnny Hotbody beat Tony Stetson in a steel cage, Rockin Rebel & Tommy Dreamer beat Jim the Messenger & Steve Savage, and Candi Devine beat Cookie Crumbles. On 3/21 in Birdsboro, PA, Nailz beat Moon, Stetson beat Hotbody in a cage, Atlas wrestled Jack Hammer to a double-countout, Messenger & Savage beat Rebel & Dreamer by DQ, Ladies Champion Brittany Brown beat Cookie Crumbles. WWWA at the Juniata Boys Club in Philly with 500 on 3/26 saw Warlord vs Jack Hammer result in a double-DQ, King Kaluha beat Larry Winters, Max Moon beat Mad Russian, Messenger & Savage beat Stars & Stripes. On 3/27 at the Holmesburg Boys Club in Philly, Max Moon beat Warlord by countout, Moon won a 22 man battle royal, Tiger Jackson beat Mr. Foo in a midgets match, Jack Hammer beat The Mad Russian, Winters beat Kaluha... Wendell Weatherbe held a card on 3/25 in Westbrook, NH with about 400. In the main matches, Nailz beat Ax, Jake Roberts (face) beat Jimmy Snuka (heel) by DQ when Phil Apollo ran in, Little Louie beat Mr. Foo in a midgets match. He returns there on 5/15 with Road Warrior Hawk vs Nailz... Killer Kowalski's IWF had shows on 3/26 in Bellingham, MA with 1,200 and 3/27 in Middleboro, MA with Jimmy Snuka beating Mountie (Jacques Rougeau) on top. On 3/27, Terrarizing won the IWF title from Mad Dog Richards. IWF has Honky Tonk Man vs Snuka on 4/30 in Deedham, MA... UWS had about 1,000 for a show in Brooklyn, NY on 3/26 with Demolition Ax & Blast and a match with Jake Roberts beating Nailz. In that match, Jake's chin got split open and was taken to the area hospital by Pro Wrestling Spotlight's John Arezzi and received 17 stitches. He was mobbed by autograph seekers (the staff of the hospital) after being stitched up. UWS had about 750 the next night in Staten Island as Jake beat Rick Martel and there was also a match with The Bushwhackers... Alan Neal Raskin, 39, who had a newsletter a couple years ago and had wrestling columns in several small Philadelphia newspapers titled *Pro Wrestling Review*, died of an apparent heart attack in his home on 3/21. WCW event coordinator Gary Juster phoned Raskin's fiancee shortly after his death and told her that the WCW planned to donate a sum of money in his name to a local institution... Wally Karbo, 77, died on 3/25 in a hospital near Minneapolis, MN of a heart attack. Karbo was heavily involved with running the AWA along with Verne Gagne... The originally scheduled and then cancelled Chris Candito vs Jerry Lynn match for the 4/17 NWA card in Minneapolis promoted by Dennis Coraluzzo is now on again... Dallas Page, Junkyard Dog, Boris Zhukov, Joey Maggs, Steve & Scott Armstrong, and The Iron Sheik are currently wrestling for Austin Idol's USA Championship Wrestling promotion running weekly shows in Dothan, Alabama... Hawk cancelled out on appearing at ECW's TV taping in Radnor, PA on 4/2 saying he hurt his back and doesn't want to jeopardize not making his Japan date on 4/6. Eddie Gilbert has quit the USWA in Memphis and will be moving to Philadelphia in the next two weeks to run ECW with Tod Gordon. They are hopeful to build up the promotion in the Philly area as a major territory. ECW's next TV taping will be in South Philly at the Viking Club (they hope to make that their home base for tapings like Center Stage and the Manhattan Center) on 5/14 and 5/15 with Gilbert, Terry Funk, Jimmy Snuka, Don Muroco. Gordon's show that was set for 3/13 was cancelled due to the "Storm of '93" and the tapings being held on 4/2 and 4/3 were almost cancelled because the Cabrini College wanted to back out, but after over twenty hours of meetings, they agreed to host the show... The Moondogs won back their USWA titles on 3/29 in Memphis from Brian Christopher & Scotty Flamingo, who only had won them the week earlier on 3/22 in Memphis.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Brian Blair, who gained his biggest success with his stint in the WWF teaming with Jim Brunzell as the Killer Bees tag team, is living in Tampa, Florida and owns and operates the Gold's Gym there. He is still a strong advocate of physical fitness and keeping himself in shape. He still does some local charity work about once a month and helped raise money for the Cancer Foundation at an event several weeks ago. He continues to speak to kids at schools about health and motivation quite frequently, but doesn't have enough time to coach wrestling any longer because of his busy schedule. He wrestles with New Japan Pro Wrestling for about ten weeks a year, with this year's' tour starting in June. At 39 years old and being the father of a new son, Bret Leslie Blair, he also likes spending a lot of time at home. "I'm happy doing what I'm doing, just enjoying the people business with the gym." Blair will be teaming up with Brunzell again on 5/1 at the Mecca Arena in Milwaukee, WI for promoter Al Patterson (who began promoting after he won a lawsuit against Vince McMahon not very long ago) and the show will be airing on pay-per-view in the state of Wisconsin.

Johnny Valiant (Johnny Valen), who held half of the WWWF tag team titles in the late 70s and later became a manager for the WWF, is living in Pittsburgh, PA and still watches wrestling on television but doesn't really keep in contact with anybody in the wrestling business. He now does stand up comedy acts at nightclubs around the country, but mainly in the Pittsburgh area. The bulk of his jokes revolve around his life and the problems that he had with alcoholism, amongst other things. He says he is happier now than when he was in wrestling because the comedy is a new venue and a new challenge for him. "After 25 years in the wrestling business, you could only go so far. I think I reeped about everything there is to get out of it." He believes that the changes in wrestling are unavoidable because, "There's always changes in politics, in show business, and life in general." The comedy acts, which is sort of an extension to what he did in wrestling as a manager and commentator (entertainer), is something that he has always wanted to do. "Being on a stage and being in front of people is something I've always waundered towards." He believes there are three different kinds of people in life; "People that watch things happen, people that make things happen, and people who don't know what the hell is happening- I'm constantly being a part of all three." At 46 years old, he also has an interest in trying marriage once again and returning to either the WWF or WCW as a color commentator or manager.

Jacques Rougeau, who found stardom in the wrestling business teaming with his brother Raymond for stints in Montreal and the WWF and more recently wrestling as The Mountie, is 31 years old and is happily living in Montreal. He quit the WWF at the end of last October after making the most money ever in his career working with The Big Bossman during a feud in the summer of 1991. He has a three year old son that he wants to be able to spend most of his time with, along with his wife, who sometimes traveled on the road with Jacques many times. While he was wrestling for the WWF he would only be home about four days a month, but now he would only like to wrestle four dates a month and be home the rest of the time. He opened a golf center near his home and someday would like to become a professional golfer. He worked several shows last weekend in Massachusetts against Jimmy Snuka, and before he went out for his match he introduced his son to Snuka because he doesn't want his son to be worried or scared about his father going out there and wrestling.

Lanny Poffo, who most recently wrestled and managed for the WWF as The Genius, has signed a two year contract with World Alliance Wrestling, a group that will shortly start up running shows in Florida. They're about to sign a major deal for TV in England and also several stations in the U.S., icluding a possibility of ESPN. He says that the promoter of the organization is Chris Rayne, and that his father Angelo is just a consultant for the group. He just saw Madusa (who has also signed a deal with WAW) for the first time and says, "Madusa is the most amazing and greatest credit to this sport that I've seen in a long time." He says that he was thrilled to hang around with Mike Lano and get his teeth done by him, no charge. He is training harder now and has lost about fifteen pounds since leaving the WWF. He does a lot of running and wind sprints, as he doesn't like to jog. He says he works out everyday for an hour and a half. He has a new book coming out called *Lanny Poffo's Positive Action Poetry; Just Say No* that will be released in England in a couple weeks. He's happy spending time with his wife Sally and his eight year daughter Megan. He admires his brother Randy Savage for his work with different charitable groups and for his speeches to kids against drugs. He is a strong advocate of the WWF and Vince McMahon. He believes that the allegations brought against Vince and the WWF are untrure. Regarding the allegations that advances were given for sex, he says, "I've worked for Vince for seven years and everybody that ever made it to the top deserved it. Anybody that ever pointed a finger was motivated not by making the world a better place in which to live, but by jealousy. They're jealous of Vince McMahon, they're jealous of Hulk Hogan. When you succeed in life, you're sure to get two things- false friends and true enemies. The higher a man goes, all the have-nots get together in their bitterness and in their jealousy and try to take them off the top of the mountain. Some of the people that are knocking him (Vince) have actually feasted off of him and have improved their lifestyles thanks to the WWF. And now that they've enjoyed all that they can enjoy and they can't enjoy it anymore, now they want to spit in the soup so that nobody else can have any. It's like, 'I've had enough, now the hell with you.'"

FLYER FAN FARE

The Honky Tonk Man is offering personally autographed 8 by 10 color photos of himself and he will write any messages you would want on it for just $6. Send the payment to HTM Enterprises at 8336 Westfair Circle South, Germantown, TN 38139... Thomas J. Fillius at 609 Heston Road, Glassboro, NJ 08028 has a video list available and is looking for tapes of Continental and NWF... Dave Prazak and Dave Ihlenfeld of Outside Interference are offering 90 minute audio tapes of their analysis on the happenings in the wrestling business that are produced every two to four weeks for $3 each at 2278 Hidden Creek Court, Lisle, IL 60532... Smoky Mountain Wrestling offers many fine tapes of their weekly television shows and merchandise on their group at PO Box 1279, Morristown, TN 37816-1279. Drop them a line for their souvenir brochure... Matthew Barry of Tim Burton Productions at Warner Hollywood Studios, 1041 North Formosa Avenue, Writer's Building Suites 9 & 10, West Hollywood, CA 90046 is looking for any person who looks like George Steele to star in a film he's making on former Swedish wrestler Tor Johnson... Mark Gallo at PO Box 50657, Cicero, IL 60650 has a list of tapes available... Jason Shepard at 1110 Vine Street, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965 runs the Shawn Michaels Fan Club and he has many different quality packages available with tapes, photos, and a newsletter on Michaels... Legends of Wrestling at 1810 Byberry Road, PO Box 1720, Bensalem, PA 19020 has shirts left from their convention in January that they're selling for $7 each and $12 for two... The woman who got suckered into diving for a gift that Doink was teasing her with at Monday Night Raw, Georgiann Makropoulos, publishes the monthly Wrestling Chatterbox that puts the business in a lighter perspective than hardcore newsletters do. Each issue is $2.50 at 23-44 30th Drive, Astoria, NY 11102... Donations for Kerry Von Erich's little girls, Holly and Lacy, can be sent to the Trust Fund at 101 East Randol Mill Road Suite 105, Arlington, TX 76011.

FLYER NEWSLETTER BACK ISSUES- INTERVIEWS WITH:
#4: Jerry Lawler, #5: Paul Roma & Johnny B. Badd, #6: Iron Sheik & Jimmy Snuka, #7: Bruno Sammartino, #8: Kerry Von Erich, #9: Sammartino, #10: Terry Taylor, #11: Hawk & Taylor, #12: Marty Jannetty, #13: Jannetty, #14: Animal, #15: Buddy Landel, #16: Davey Boy Smith & Paul Ellering, #17: Jake Roberts, #18: Roberts & Bill Watts, #19: Various, #20: Madusa, #21: Madusa, #22: Paul E. Dangerously, #23: Earthquake, #24: Honky Tonk Man. Each back issue is $2 ($3 outside of U.S.) (no color photo) and can be ordered by sending the proper payment to the Flyer addres

In an effort to improve the quality of this newsletter, we would appreciate it if you could please phone in a report of any live shows you attend within a day after the event is held to our phoneline (215)566-3852 at any and all hours of the day. THANK YOU.

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